

# SUFFOLK NANSEMOND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 25, Issue 4

November 2016



## The Suffolk-Nansemond Historical Society's 40th Annual Candlelight Tour: The Sights & Sounds of Christmas

*We are so thankful to be able to bring this Sights and Sounds tour to you all. This is our fortieth year showcasing the historic homes and buildings that make up our lovely town and this tour represents so much for our Historical Society. Not only is Candlelight Tour our biggest and most important fundraiser of the year, it is a fulfillment of our mission to teach and promote the history of Suffolk to the public. Without the support of this tour and your continued memberships The Suffolk-Nansemond Historical Society may not be able to continue fulfilling our mission. So we must say again, Thank You!*

### This year's houses and activities:

A great place to start and end your Candlelight Tour is at our Phillips-Dawson House headquarters. Here you can purchase tickets if you haven't already, make your selections from our Sugar Plum Kitchen, and grab a refreshment before you head out into the cold. Parking is available on the street as well as in the city lot behind our headquarters. As a special bonus this year we have partnered with a number of Downtown Suffolk restaurants to offer 10% off your meal when you present your Candlelight Tour ticket. Present your ticket for your discount between December 3-10:

Amicis—157 East Washington Street  
East Coast Taco Company—116 East Washington Street  
Plaid Turnip—115 North Main Street  
Harper's Table—122 North Main Street  
Baron's Pub—185 North Main Street  
Mosaic—110 Finney Avenue  
Stillwater House Tea Room—201 Prentis Street  
Hilton Garden Inn--100 East Constance Street



## 2016 Candlelight Tour Sponsors (as of 11/14/2016):

### \$250 Sponsors:

The Addison Group



Birdsong Peanuts



Carr Investment Group



Chorey & Associates



Ralph Nahra

### \$100 Sponsors:

Cross Management

Harbour View Oral & Facial Surgery

Saunders & Ojeda, P.C.

### \$50 Sponsors:

William C. Johnson, Attorney at Law

If you do not see your name or company's contribution listed please contact us at:

[info@suffolkhistory.org](mailto:info@suffolkhistory.org)

Due to our tight timeframe to get this newsletter to print we have listed only those sponsors whose payments have been received as of the time of printing. Thank you ALL for your support and care for our annual fundraiser.

All donations and sponsorships are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

### Letter from the Director:



Happy holidays to each and every one of you! I sincerely hope that you get the chance to spend time with those closest to you this holiday season.

We have the honor of hosting our 40th Candlelight Tour this year. This year brings a wonderful mix of homes, churches, and historic buildings. And how can we call it the "sights & sounds" of Christmas without mentioning the music that will be showcased throughout the tour. Thank you for continuing to support your Historical Society at the holidays and throughout the year.

I have also been lucky to be the recipient of your support during my time as Executive Director. The time has come, however, for me to pass the torch of leadership. 2016 will be my last with the Historical Society as I transition to a new position. I will take the many lessons I learned here with me into the future and I will always appreciate the people I have been fortunate enough to meet and work with while here. I know you will continue to give your support to my successor and I look forward to seeing just how far this Society can go!

Thank you for everything.

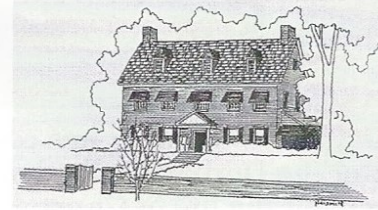
—Ashley Nicole "Nikki"  
Lorenzen, M.A.



## Pinner, Bank, and Franklin Street Attractions:

### The Withers-Beatty House 214 Pinner Street

Built by Mr. and Mrs. John Thornton Withers in 1910, this home was the social hub of the family for almost half a century. Mrs. Withers (Phoebe Jones) was a daughter of the Jones' who lived at the corner of Bank and Pinner Streets so family visits were easily accomplished. Wedding receptions for each of their four daughters were held in this large home. Now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Beatty, the Colonial Revival home remains a beautiful example of fine craftsmanship. 14 rooms and 3 1/2 baths sit above the basement and lovely gardens make this home a peaceful retreat from downtown.



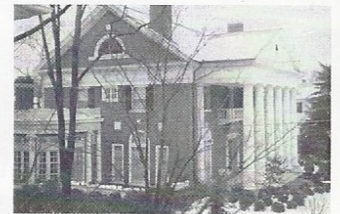
### The Phillips-Dawson House (SNHS Headquarters) 137 Bank Street

The land on which the house was built was purchased from D.C. Harrell in 1881 by Horace B. Phillips. It is unknown whether the lot had a house on it at that time or if Mr. Phillips had a new home constructed. However, it is clear from the 1889 Sanborn Insurance map of Suffolk that the original house at 137 Bank was roughly two rooms deep with a side hall which was typical of Suffolk homes at that time. The entrance to the home was also originally facing Franklin Street. The later 1897 Sanborn map indicates that the bay wing and side entrance on Bank Street were added in the interim. It wasn't until the 1920s that the original Franklin Street entrance and porch was removed and the Bank Street entrance was enlarged to be the primary entry way to the home. Although the house was originally finished in exposed brick it has since been covered in stucco after major renovations.



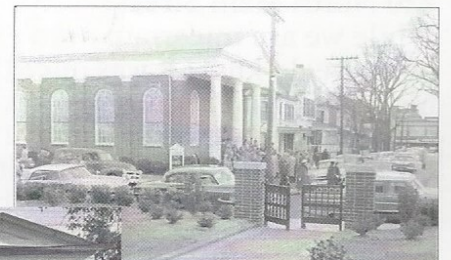
### The Truitt-Crumpler--Baker Mansion 204 Bank Street

This grand home was built in 1909 on the corner of Grace and Bank Streets. Built for lumber magnate George W. Truitt it comes as no surprise that the home features beautiful woodwork and flooring. 20+ rooms make up this immense home which boasts its very own ballroom and parlor with a musicians' gallery. In 1958 a Bank Street native, William Crumpler, purchased the home where he lived with his family. The Crumpler family remained in the house until the 2012 when Ruth Baker purchased it at auction with the intent to transform the neglected building into a bed and breakfast.



### Trinity Christian Church 128 Franklin Street

Built in 1924 as a Presbyterian church, Trinity Christian Church was founded in 1964. This is their first time opening for tour and we hope you can all visit and wish them a warm welcome!

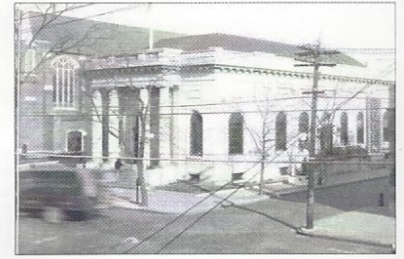




## Main Street Attractions:

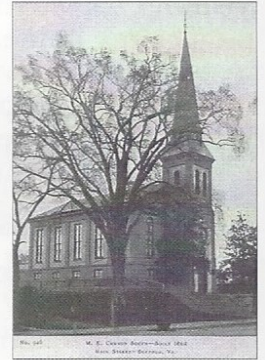
### Historic US Post Office (now Pretlow Jackson, a professional corporation) 200 North Main Street

This Renaissance style building is the only example of a monumental dressed stone building on Main Street. Built in 1911 as a Post Office the building was closed in 1987 and is now a law office.



### Main Street Methodist Church 202 North Main Street

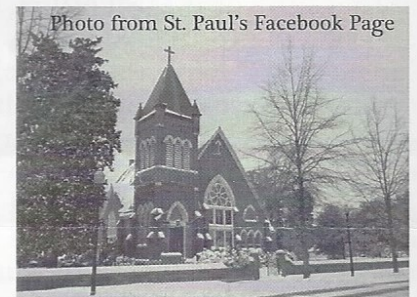
Construction on this building was completed in 1916 and it is said to have been modeled after the Durham Cathedral in England. Stained glass windows featured in the church tell the life of Christ. In 1953 a two story educational building was erected and the current building is the third for the church on this site. The church's architecture is an unusual combination of both Gothic and Tudor styles.



### St. Paul's Episcopal Church 213 North Main Street

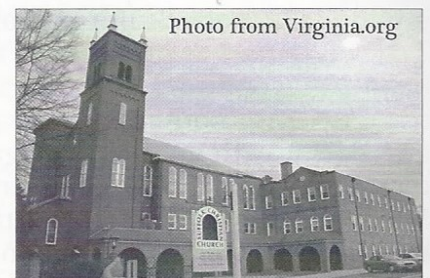
"Five church buildings, in five distinct locations, have served St. Paul's throughout its history, including its present home. [...] The present 1895 Gothic-style church building is filled with relics from many periods of the past and reminds us not only of the historical struggles of our nation, but of our long history of building faith in downtown Suffolk. Major additions and alterations were made to the building in 1914, 1922, and 1964. Many of the features of the current sanctuary date to renovations from the 1960s. The chapel, added in 1989, features several important pieces from the distant past, including wooden tablets displaying the Lord's Prayer, Apostles' Creed, and the Ten Commandments."

(excerpt from [www.stpaulssuffolk.com/history.htm](http://www.stpaulssuffolk.com/history.htm))



### Suffolk Christian Church 216 North Main Street

The first church was built on this site around 1860 and was replaced by the present building in the 1890s. By the 1920s, however, the façade had been changed to create the Romanesque building seen today. Their sanctuary displays a series of the matching, original Victorian stained glass windows and curved pews bring congregants close to the minister and make the wide space intimate.



### The Van Valkenburgh House (now Edward Jones financial advising) 220 North Main Street

While we are uncertain as to exactly when this fine home was built, we do know it was once the home of Richard Seth Eley and his wife, Eliza Priscilla Riddick Eley. The couple moved into the home after their marriage in 1866 and it remained in their family for five generations ending with Elizabeth Campbell van Valkenburgh. The home has had a few owners since including the Suffolk Christian Church, the Snyders (who moved the home 80 feet north to save it from demolition), and more recently it is the home of Edward Jones' Justin Sorensen. The house is made of heart-pine and you can still see some of the hand wrought nails in the floors.

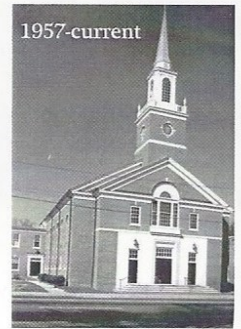
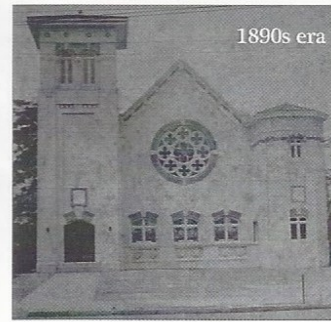




## Main Street Attractions Continued:

### First Baptist Church 237 North Main Street

In 1836, after moving from its first location at the end of Mahan Street, Suffolk Baptist Church (as it was named at the time) came to its current location on Main Street. In 1929, 138 members withdrew from Suffolk Baptist to form the West End Baptist Church and Suffolk Baptist changed its name to First Baptist Church. The current church building is the third for the current site and is still in use today.



### The Prentis House 321 North Main Street

One of the oldest standing homes in Suffolk, the Prentis House was purchased by Peter Bowdoin Prentis from Dr. John Thompson Kilby on December 21, 1857. During the Union occupation of Suffolk during the Civil War, Mrs. Prentis, then a clerk for the Nansemond County Court, was arrested and held hostage with other prominent Suffolkians, to ensure the town's cooperation with the troops. Prentis was later returned safely and resumed his position with the court.



### Seaboard Station Railroad Museum 326 North Main Street

This Queen Anne style station was built in 1885 and has remained basically unchanged over the years. The station was used for a freight office for several years by CSX and then it was abandoned. In 1994 a disastrous fire occurred and the station was in danger of being demolished. At that time the Suffolk- Nansemond Historical Society began a movement to "Save Our Station". After several years of fundraising efforts by the Society and in partnership with the City of Suffolk, grants were obtained and the renovation began. The station officially opened in August of 2000. Many original features were saved and restored such as the doors, windows, coffered ceiling, fireplace and porch.



### Riddick's Folly 510 North Main Street

"In early 1837 a fire ravaged dozens of homes and outbuildings at the north end of Main Street in Suffolk. Out of the ashes of that fire Mr. Mills Riddick built their home that is known today as Riddick's Folly. During the Union occupation of Suffolk the house served as headquarters of Major General John J. Peck and his staff of Union Army officers. Riddick descendants continued to live in the home until 1967 when the house and grounds were sold to Nansemond County for use as office space. In 1977, Riddick's Folly was established as a facility for cultural events in Suffolk. In 1988 and 1989 the house underwent an extensive privately funded restoration and became Suffolk's only house museum." (excerpt from [www.riddicksfolly.org](http://www.riddicksfolly.org))





## Calendar of Events

- December 3rd:** 40th Annual Candlelight Tour  
3pm-7pm  
Pinner, Bank, Franklin & Main
- December 3rd:** Toys-for-Tots Toy Drive  
Train Station Museum  
326 Main Street
- December 4th:** 40th Annual Candlelight Tour  
3pm-7pm  
Pinner, Bank, Franklin & Main
- December 10th:** Story Time at the Train Station  
10:30am  
Suffolk Public Library
- February 7th:** Afternoon Conversations  
Lecture with Mark Summers of  
Jamestown  
137 Bank Street  
2pm
- February 21st:** Black History Month Lecture  
with  
Therbia Parker  
137 Bank Street  
2pm

## Trick-or-Treat @ Touch-A-Truck!:

This year's Touch-A-Truck was a smashing success! Thank you so much to all who came out with their kids to support us. And thank you as well to our generous sponsors who donated their time and equipment to our event. We couldn't have done it without you!





## Thanks to our 2016 corporate members:

### Phillips-Dawson Circle (\$5,000+)



### Bank Street Circle (\$2,500+)



*Birdsong* PEANUTS

### Nansemond Circle (\$1,000+)



**FARMERS BANK**  
*Community Banking Perfected*

**Tommy O'Connor**

### Suffolk Circle (\$500+)

| LW's Lawn Service, LLC   |  |
|--|--|
| LeOtis Williams<br>Manager   | 615 E. Pinner Street<br>P.O. Box 3285<br>Suffolk, VA 23439 |
| Complete<br>Landscaping<br>Services  | Phone (757) 925.0747<br>Fax (757) 925.4943                 |
| Licensed<br>& Bonded   |  |
| <small>"We don't mind working in the heat<br/>and our prices just can't be beat"</small> |  |

### Seaboard Circle (\$250+)



**Willis Suffolk, LLC**

### SNHS Board

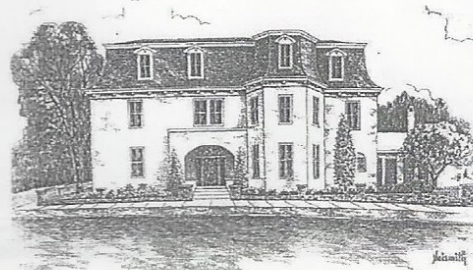
Sandra Councill, President  
Art Robb, Treasurer  
Tommy Arthur, Asst. Treasurer  
Kermit Hobbs, Historian

Ralph Nahra  
Pretlow Henderson  
Hazel White  
Anna Patricia Hines  
Gerri Outterbridge  
Lee King

### PHS Board

Brian Donahue, President  
Lee King, Vice President  
Sue Woodward, Secretary  
Darrell Cook

### *The Phillips-Dawson House*



#### *A Home for Local History*

Street address: 137 Bank St., Suffolk, VA 23434

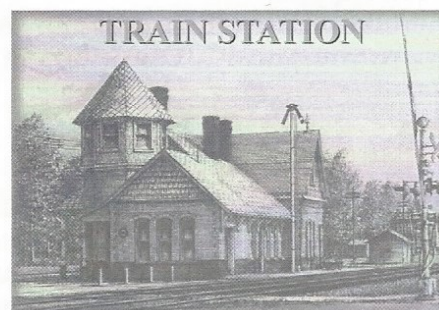
Mailing address: P. O. Box 1255, Suffolk VA 23439

Phone: 757-539-2781

Email: [info@suffolkhistory.org](mailto:info@suffolkhistory.org)

[www.suffolkhistory.org](http://www.suffolkhistory.org)

Nicole Lorenzen, Executive Director



#### *Suffolk's Most Recognizable Landmark*


Street address: 326 N. Main St., Suffolk, VA 23434

Mailing address: P. O. Box 1255, Suffolk, VA 23439

Phone: 757-923-4750

Lucas Tiffany, Train Station Manager



SUFFOLK NANSEMOND  HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P. O. Box 1255  
Suffolk, Virginia 23439-1255

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
SUFFOLK, VA  
PERMIT NO. 24



Suffolk-Nansemond Historical Society  
presents the  
40TH ANNUAL  
*Candlelight Tour*  
THE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF CHRISTMAS  
Saturday, December 3  
Sunday, December 4  
3:00pm - 7:00pm

**TICKETS**

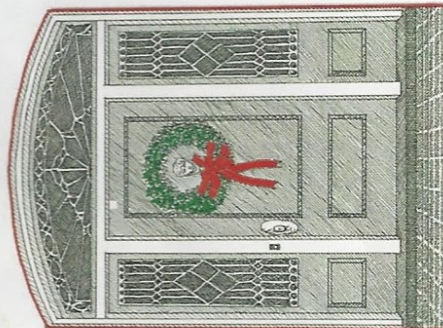
\$20 per person (advance)  
\$25 (day of tour)

**Ticket Outlets**

Seaboard Station Railroad Museum  
Suffolk Visitor Center  
Suffolk Insurance  
A. Dodson's

On tour days, tickets available only  
at the Phillips-Dawson House

757.539.2781 • [suffolkhistory.org](http://suffolkhistory.org)



Donated by Edward L. King "Dawson House Overway," 137 Dock Street c. 1881

*Tour Includes*

214 Pinner Street  
Mr. & Mrs. Marvin Beatty  
137 Dock Street-SNHQS  
The Phillips-Dawson House  
204 Bond Street-The Taitt Mansion  
Ms. Ruth Baker  
128 Franklin Street-  
Trinity Christian Church  
200 North Main Street-Old Post Office  
Law Offices of Fretlow, Fretlow & Jackson  
202 North Main Street-  
Main Street Methodist Church  
213 North Main Street-  
St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
216 North Main Street-  
Suffolk Christian Church  
220 North Main Street-Edward Jones  
The Van Valkenburg House  
237 North Main Street-  
First Baptist Church  
321 North Main Street-  
The Prentiss House  
326 North Main Street-  
The Seaboard Station Railroad Museum  
510 North Main Street-  
Ridlick's Folly